

TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY

BULLETIN

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## SUPERSTITIONS AND FOLK BELIEFS

The study reproduced here as the principal item of this issue of the Bulletin was made by Mr. W. Adelbert Redfield, of Pleasant Hill Academy. It is a collection of Superstitions and Folk Beliefs made by Mr. Redfield through his first-year classes. Since these students are all attending a boarding school in which they have to earn all of their way, it becomes clear that their social and economic backgrounds of home life are peculiarly of the sort into which this type of folklore is most deeply rooted. Pleasant Hill Academy is located on the Cumberland Plateau between Crossville and Sparta.

--Editor

### An Outline of the Collection

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SUPERSTITIONS AND FOLK BELIEFS

## A. AILMENTS AND REMEDIES

1. Folk Remedies for Persons;

1. For the earache smoke rabbit tobacco and blow the smoke in the ear.
2. Collect some polecat grease, put a little on a cloth, and squeeze the grease out of the cloth letting it drop in the ear to cure earache.
3. To cure earache put two or three drops of polecat grease in your ear.
4. To stop earache use polecat grease -- fill the ear with it.
5. Render the oil out of a rattlesnake, heat it, and put a few drops in the ear for earache.
6. For earache put two drops of rattlesnake oil in the ear.
7. To cure earache, do not put rattlesnake oil in the ear, but rub it around it.
8. Heat castor-oil, put a drop in the ear for earache.
9. For earache dampen goat wool in castor-oil and apply to ear.
10. To cure earache take some cotton and dampen it with sweet oil and put it in your ear.
11. Get a green hickory stick, put one end of it in the fire. When the sap comes out put it on cotton and put the cotton in your ear to cure earache.
12. If you will put a hickory stick in the fire until the sap starts to drip out and let it drip in your ear, it is good for the earache.
13. Take a piece of possum wood and put it in the fire. Fix it so you can catch the sap and put the sap in your ear for earache.
14. Warm molasses and drop into the ear for earache.
15. For the earache put some warm water in the ear.
16. Steam from sweet milk is good for the earache.
17. For earache heat corn meal, put in a cloth and lay on the ear.

18. To cure earache put a warm rock to the ear.
19. For earache heat an iron, wrap it in a cloth and keep the ear to it.
20. For earache get a towel hot and put it to the ear.
21. Use hot flannel cloth for earache.
22. When your side is hurting raise up a rock and spit under it and place it back where it was and don't look and your side will stop hurting.
23. Spit on a rock, throw over the left shoulder, to cure sideache.
24. Throw a rock over the left shoulder and not look back and your side will stop hurting.
25. To cure sideache caused from running, hold your breath until you count 20.
26. To cure sideache when running hold your breath as long as you can.
27. When side is hurting lay down and draw four deep breaths.
28. Sugar and sage will stop stomachache.
29. When washing of mornings dry your hands first, instead of your face. This will prevent toothache.
30. For toothache put a piece of alum on your tooth and it will stop the pain.
31. To cure toothache put some turpentine on a small cloth and lay it on the tooth.
32. If you pick your teeth with a splinter of a lightning-struck tree it will cure the toothache.
33. For asthma, smoke mullen leaves in a pipe.
34. Dry and crumble up ginseng in a saucer, set it on fire and inhale the smoke from it to cure asthma.
35. Make a tea out of mullen and sweeten with honey to cure asthma.
36. To cure asthma gather the leaves off of the rabbit tobacco plant and boil it and drink the water.
37. Drink the water off of sassafras for asthma.
38. Drink cottonwood tea for asthma.

39. Put a mark on a tree and when you outgrow the mark asthma will leave.
40. Cut a mark on a tree. When the mark grows up your asthma is cured.
41. Bore a hole in a tree and take a lock of hair out of the crown of the head and put it in the hole in the tree and place a cork in the hole. This will cure asthma.
42. Eat peppermint candy for asthma.
43. Madstone out of a deer head will cure mad dog bites.
44. For mad dog bite chew home-made tobacco and put the juice on the bite.
45. To see if a dog which has bitten a person is mad, boil a madstone in milk and apply to the bite. If the madstone doesn't stick to the wound, the bite isn't poisonous.
46. For mad dog bites dip the madstone in sweet milk, put it on the bite and don't take it off until it comes off. It will draw out the poison.
47. Put kerosene on a snake bite to kill the poison.
48. Drink rattlesnake oil for rattlesnake bite.
49. Drink kerosene oil for rattlesnake bite.
50. When you have a cut take a spider web, bind plenty of it around the cut, then put the gauze and tape on.
51. Bleeding may be stopped by some persons who repeat a certain verse from the Book of Ezekiel.
52. When you have a bad cut get somebody to stop it by saying a Bible verse. They will look at the cut then turn their head and say the verse and the bleeding will stop.
53. To stop bleeding rub alum on the place that bleeds.
54. To stop bleeding scorch some cotton and put it over the spot.
55. When you have hurt yourself and are bleeding, take a drop of blood and put on a knife and stick it up in the ground and it will stop bleeding.
56. When you are cut put soot and sugar in the cut and it will stop the bleeding.

57. Hold the pot hooks over your head to stop the nose from bleeding.
58. A dime between the lips will keep the nose from bleeding.
59. When your nose is bleeding wet the back of your head with cold water.
60. Put a wet piece of paper between your teeth and lips to make the nose stop bleeding.
61. To wear lead around your neck will keep your nose from bleeding.
62. Wear a string of red beads around the neck to stop nose from bleeding.
63. To hold a nickel up in the roof of your mouth will stop your nose from bleeding.
64. Put a knife down your collar to stop nose bleeding.
65. Roll a cigarette and put it in the upper lip to stop the nose from bleeding.
66. To stop nose bleeding, pull the hair in top of the head.
67. Put water on the back of the head to stop nose from bleeding.
68. To stop nosebleed eat salt.
69. Put a cold, wet cloth on the forehead to stop nosebleed.
70. To stop nosebleed put a cold, wet towel on the back of the neck.
71. Wash the face in cold water to stop the nose from bleeding.
72. For a bruise wash in vinegar and brown paper.
73. You can take a leaf of ginseng and wilt it over the fire and put it on the stone bruise and it will draw it to a head.
74. Mix rosin and mutton tallow together and put it on the bruise and it will draw the soreness out.
75. To cure chickenpox go in the chicken house and scare the chickens off the roost and stand so they will fly over your head.
76. For chickenpox kill a black chicken, pick off the feathers, put them in a pan and let the person with chickenpox step over it.

77. For chickenpox let white chicken blood drip on chickenpox blisters.
78. Polecat grease is good for a cold.
79. For a bad cold, burn some whiskey and drink a little.
80. Take linament for cold.
81. 1 teaspoon sugar, 1 drop turpentine, 1 drop kerosene. Heat until melted, and take for colds.
82. Boil sweetgum bark and make a syrup out of the juice and drink it for a bad cold.
83. For corns on the feet boil laurel leaves and strain juice. Mix with lard, turpentine, and kerosene and put on cotton and put on the corn.
84. Rub salve on the bottom of the feet to stop coughing when you have croup.
85. When a baby is cutting teeth, get a fresh egg and write the name, birthday, and the day it first starts to cut a tooth and something that happened during that day. Hide the egg and do not tell anyone and the baby will be all right.
86. Fever weed is good for the fever.
87. Salve on the bottom of your feet will cause the temperature to go down.
88. Scaley hickory bark boiled and sweetened will stop flu.
89. Boil the roots of sassafras and drink the tea for flu.
90. Drink dog fennel tea for flu.
91. To cure frostbitten feet set feet in cold spring water before sunrise.
92. To cure hiccough drink nine sips of water counting them backward and not taking a breath between.
93. To cure hiccough take nine sips of water and hold your right hand up.
94. To stop hiccough scare the person or surprise him.
95. For hiccough make the person angry by picking on or aggravating him.
96. To cure hiccough put a towel over your left shoulder.

97. For hiccough drink some soda water.
98. To stop hiccough count to 100 as fast as you can five times.
99. Say this three times to cure hiccough. "Hiccough (he-cup), teacup; Jump up, Jacob."
100. To stop hiccoughs have some one to name them some boy and if he loves you they will stop.
101. To cure hiccough think of the one that loves you.
102. To cure hiccough lick your tongue out. The next time you hiccough stick it out a little farther and keep this up until they get well.
103. Polk-root tea is good for indigestion.
104. Sulphur and lard is good for itch.
105. Get some polk-root and make some ooze and take a bath and it will cure the itch.
106. Drink sheep tea to make the measles break out.
107. Red pepper tea is good to break out measles.
108. Whiskey and honey mixed together is good for breaking out the measles.
109. To cure a pain in the side hold a warm rock on the side which is aching.
110. To cure sideache (pain in the side) cook some peach tree leaves and put them in a cloth and apply them to the side.
111. For sun pain cut a lock of hair from your head and bury it in the head of a spring that runs toward the east and it will cure the pain.
112. Boil wild cherry bark and drink the juice for rheumatism.
113. For rheumatism take the inner bark of a wild cherry tree and boil to a tea and drink.
114. For rheumatism boil wild cherry bark and put it in corn whiskey and drink it.
115. Rattlesnake oil will cure rheumatism.
116. For rheumatism boil the root of red or yellow "Puccoon" (Golden Seal) and make tea and drink it while it is hot.

117. If you have rheumatism use juice from a weed called "queen of the meadow".
118. When you have rheumatism make some polk-berry wine and drink the wine until your rheumatism is gone.
119. Place a block of ice on the pulse and let it stay until it melts to cure the rheumatism.
120. Scrape an Irish potato and make a poultice to cure rheumatism.
121. Boil mullen and use the juice for swelling.
122. Sulphur and sugar mixed is good for boils.
123. For boils wilt a cabbage leaf in ashes and bind on it.
124. Prickly pear will cure boils.
125. Take a piece of biscuit and soak it in sweet milk and it will cure a boil.
126. Mix sugar and tub soap together for boils.
127. If you have a sore, make a dog lick the sore and it will get well.
128. When a bee stings you, get three different kinds of leaves and mash them up and hold them on the sting and it won't swell.
129. Put bruised rag weeds on a bee sting.
130. If a bee stings you, rub three kinds of weeds on the sting.
131. For a bee sting, put smoking tobacco in hot water and bandage it on the sting.
132. Very soon after a bee stings you put a wet piece of tobacco leaf on the sting. It will stop the pain.
133. If some kind of an insect stings, like a bee, hornet, or something, let someone that chews tobacco put some on the sting.
134. For a bee sting make a paste of soda and water and put on the sting.
135. Put turpentine on stings.
136. Put kerosene on stings.
137. When you have a sty, go to a crossroads and say, "Sty, sty, leave my eye, go to the next person passing by."

138. To remove a sty, go down to the forks of the road, turn around and come back and kiss the first girl you meet.
139. To remove a sty from your eye, go down to the forks of the road and catch the first brown cat that you see. Rub the cat's tail through your eye nine times.
140. To cure a sty rub a black cat's tail through the eye.
141. To remove a sty, sweep a broom across your face nine times. The sty will be gone in nine days.
142. If anyone has a sty on the eye, do not look them straight in the eye or you will catch the sty and it will disappear from the affected person.
143. If you have a sty and someone says you have a sty, then you say it is a lie three times and the sty will go away.
144. If someone has a sty on their eye and you tell them they have a sty and if they say that it is a lie, the sty comes on you.
145. For a sty make a poultice of cactus and place over the eye.
146. If a child has the thrash let him drink out of a person's shoe heel who is no blood kin to the child.
147. Get some yellow-root and boil out the juice and give the juice to the person who has thrash.
148. Anybody that has T.B., make a tea out of crossvine and it will cure them.
149. Take as many grains of corn as you have warts, prick the warts and let a drop of blood fall on each grain and let a chicken eat the corn. In a few days the warts will leave.
150. Steal a dish rag from somebody that is not any kin to you and hide it without anyone seeing you and your warts will disappear.
151. To remove warts, pick the wart with a pin until it bleeds, then steal your mother's dish rag and wipe the blood on it and hide it under the eaves of the house and never go back to it or tell where it is.
152. To remove warts, rub them with the head of a match until they are raw, strike the match and let the place get hot and the smoke go on it and it will leave.

153. Take a piece of elder stalk and rub over a wart and bury the stalk and the wart will disappear.
154. If you have a wart, put a katydid on it and it will disappear.
155. Rub gravels on warts to take them off.
156. Use a chicken gizzard to take off warts.
157. Tell someone your whole name and they will go out and find a rock and spit under it for nine mornings and your warts will leave.
158. To remove warts, stick a straight pin in the wart and bury it.
159. Take a knife and cut a cross on the wart and it will come off.
160. Rub a penny over a wart and give the penny to another person and the wart will leave you and come on the person you gave the penny to.
161. When you cut your finger with a knife, take the knife and stick it in the ground and your finger will stop bleeding.
162. To keep the foot from getting sore when you stick a nail in it, stick the nail in the ground.
163. Boil chestnut leaves and make a tea for the whooping cough.

## 2. Folk Remedies for Animals;

164. Put soot on the place and it will stop bleeding in a horse.
165. When a cow gets choked on shorts and dairy feed or cotton seed meal pour water in her ear.
166. When a cow gets choked get out in front of her and jump and holler, and she will get unchoked.
167. Feed parched corn to hogs for the cholera.
168. Put a string with kerosene on it around a cat's neck for the distemper.
169. Get a gourd and cut the handle in small rings and put around a dog's neck for the distemper.
170. To cure a horse's distemper, blindfold him and burn sugar and make the horse inhale it.

3. Causes of Ailments;a. Natural,

- 171. The nose will bleed every time it thunders.
- 172. Handling frogs cause warts.

b. Induced,

- 173. If you sleep with your head toward the sun you will wake up with a headache.
- 174. Walking in another's tracks will give him the headache.

4. Preventives and Tonics;

- 175. Wearing asafetida around your neck will ward off germs.
- 176. Tie a piece of flannel around you to keep from being sick.
- 177. Keep a flannel string around the body to keep away disease.
- 178. Carry snake root with you to prevent snakes from biting you.
- 179. For chiggers, rub penny-royal on pants legs and around shoe tops.
- 180. Use kerosene on pants legs and shoe tops for chiggers and seed ticks.
- 181. Sassafras tea is good to thin the blood.

5. "Faith Doctors" and Healing;

- 162. The seventh boy in the family will be a doctor.

B. ANIMATE NATURE1. Animals;a. Animal Husbandry, etc.;

- 163. Kill hogs two or three days after full of the moon and the meat will be much tenderer.

184. Kill hogs on the new of the moon and the meat will be puffy.
185. To have good luck with baby chicks throw the egg shells over a house top.
186. Anybody that has hairy legs is said to be a good hog raiser.
187. You can take anybody's dog away from him; just take a piece of bread and rub it under your arm and the dog will follow you.
188. To stop a screech owl from hollowing, turn your cap inside out.

b. Animal Influences and Signs,

189. Cats playing is a sign of bad weather.
190. Cows always kneel and pray on Christmas night at midnight.
191. If you kill a frog the cow will give bloody milk.
192. If the owner of a cow kills a frog his cow will give bloody milk.
193. If you kill a toad the cow will go dry.
194. If you kill a frog it will come and count your teeth after night.

c. Birds,

195. If a rooster crows after dark it is a sure sign that someone is going out of the family.
196. When a bird flies on your head it means that one will go out of the family.
197. When you see a redbird someone is coming that you are not expecting.
198. If you see a redbird, spit toward it, and if it flies up you'll see someone you are not expecting.
199. When you see a redbird make a wish and if it flies high it will come true; if it flies low it won't.
200. If a redbird crosses the road in front of you and flies to the right you will see your sweetheart before Saturday night.

201. If the redbird flies to the left you will see your sweetheart before Saturday at twelve.

d. Insects, etc.,

202. If a measuring worm gets on any part of your clothes, that is a sign you will get something new, the color of the worm.
203. If a spider comes down in front of you, it is a sign you will get a letter.
204. Don't ever let a crawfish or waterdog get hold of you because they won't turn loose till it thunders.

2. Plants;

205. Plant beans on blossom day and there will not be any beans, but will all be blossoms. Blossom day comes on Tuesday before Good Friday.
206. Always plant beans in the morning.
207. Beans should always be planted on Good Friday.
208. When you plant corn in the light of the moon it will all go to stalk.
209. Always plant potatoes and corn in the dark of the moon.
210. If you plant corn in the new of the moon it will grow tall. If you plant it in the old moon it will grow low and the ears hang over.
211. Plant corn when dogwood is in full bloom.
212. Plant corn on the 15th of May.
213. Plant corn when the whippoorwill goes to hollowing.
214. Plant cucumbers on the light of the moon, or the bugs will eat them.
215. Plant your cucumbers before sun-up on Good Friday.
216. Plant cucumbers after dark and they will not all be blooms.
217. Plant cucumbers of the morning; if you don't they will bloom "their self" to death.
218. Plant potatoes in the full of the moon for a good crop.

219. Plant potatoes in the light of the moon.
220. To plant potatoes in the dark of the moon they will make more and be larger.
221. Always plant your potatoes in the old moon.
222. In planting potatoes so there would be but one stalk to the hill -- put pepper in all eyes but one.
223. Bed sweet potatoes on the 8th of April.
224. To keep from planting tobacco seed too thick, start with a thimble half full and fall down and spill half of those.
225. In sowing a tobacco bed get out what you consider enough seeds. Put half of them back and before you get to the bed throw half of them away.
226. Plant turnips on the 25th of July because turnips will be made wet or dry.
227. Watermelons should be planted on the tenth of May.
228. Watermelons should be planted while apple trees are in bloom.
229. Dig potatoes in the new of the moon.
230. Cut hay in the light of the moon.
231. When you shell your seed corn be sure and don't burn the cobs for if you do you certainly won't raise any corn.
232. When the first stalk of corn you see is white, it is a sign of a light crop year.
233. Every white stalk of corn is a sign of 100 bushels of corn.
234. When there is a snow at Christmas it is a sign of a good crop year.
235. Hard winter -- good crop year.
236. Mild winter means average crop year; extremely cold winter a good crop year.
237. If there is snow on Christmas day it is a sign of a good fruit year.
238. When it rains on the first day of June there won't be any grapes.

c. Plants and Flowers;

239. If you thank someone for flower cuttings, they won't bloom.

C. THE INANIMATE:

1. The Moon and the Stars;

240. Wean a calf in the dark of the moon and it will bawl all the time.
241. If you see the new moon first through tree tops or brush, it is bad luck; but if you see it clearly with nothing between you and the moon, it is good luck.
242. It is bad luck for the moon to shine on you while sleeping.

2. Signs of the Zodiac;

243. Wean a calf when the sign is in the heart and it will bawl all the time.
244. When the sign is in the head, set out cabbage.
245. Plant stick-beans when the sign is in the arm and they will run better.
246. If cucumbers are planted when the sign is in the arm they will grow as long as your arm.
247. Plant cucumbers when the sign is in twins. There will be two cucumbers to every bloom.
248. Plant corn when the sign is in the arm.
249. When the sign is in the arm plant corn.
250. When the sign is in the head fish won't bite.

3. Special Days and Seasons;

251. Leave a handkerchief out all night April 30th and wash your face in the dew that collects on it by May Day morning to remove freckles.
252. Place a cloth in the dew on the first night of May and wash your face in it for beautiful complexion.

253. Hold a mirror over a well so that you can see yourself on the first day of May at twelve o'clock and you will see your future husband or wife.
254. If you hang a cloth outside for the first 15 days of May, all the time it is out it will not mildew, but will whiten.
255. Sewing on Sunday is bad luck.
256. For every stitch you sew on Sunday, there will be that many lies told on you.
257. You will have trouble all week if you cut your finger nails off on Sunday.
258. Cut off your finger nails for nine Sundays and the ninth Sunday you will eat dinner with the person you are going to marry.
259. To wash on New Year's Day is bad luck.
260. If you wash clothes on New Year's Day you will be washing for the dead before the year is out.
261. On New Year's Day bring something in every time you go outside and you will be prosperous the rest of the year.
262. If a woman comes on New Year's Day the chickens will all be pullets, and if a man they will all be roosters.
263. Cut a bush down on the twenty-seventh day of August and it will not sprout again.
264. Twenty-seventh day of August is the "most poisonest" day of the year.

D. HUMAN LIFE:

1. Friendship

265. In going through woods if someone goes around a tree from you, you will be angry at him sometime.
266. If two persons go different ways around a tree, if they do not spit, they will be angry at each other.
267. If two people are walking along and one of them goes on one side of a tree and the other person on the other side of it, it is bad luck and you must say "bread and butter".

## 2. Love and Marriage;

268. When a boy gives a girl a knife, that cuts their love in two.
269. When you build a fire, spit on it and name it. If the fire burns, that person loves you.
270. Get two violets and name them each a boy and lock their heads together and pull them, and the one's head that does not come off loves you the best.
271. If you count three stars for three nights, you will dream of the one who loves you. If you count seven stars for seven nights, you will dream of the one that you are going to marry.
272. If you can make your forefinger and little finger meet behind your other two fingers, you will marry the one you want.
273. To get two knives at the table is a sign you will get married.
274. Put your stockings under your head on Friday night and say this little rhyme and you will dream of your husband-to-be:  
Now I lay me down to sleep  
With my stocking under my head,  
And I hope that I will dream  
Of the one that I am to wed.
275. Put a pulley-bone over the door and the first one who comes in is the one you are going to marry.
276. If you start to jump the rope, say the alphabet and the letter you miss jumping on will be the initial of your future husband or wife.
277. When washing if you splash water on yourself it is a sign that you will marry a drunkard.
278. When a girl makes a fire and it burns it is a sign she will get a smart man; if it does not burn she will get a dull man.
279. When a quilt has been quilted, before it is slept under, put a black cat in the center and surround the quilt with several people and shake until the cat jumps out. The one that the cat jumps over will be the first to get married.
280. The person that quilts the last stitch on the quilt will be the first of the group to marry.

281. If you turn a chair over and if someone starts counting before you pick it up, the number they will count to it will be that many years before you will marry.
282. Take a glass about half-full of water and a gold ring. Tie a string to the ring and slowly lower it to the bottom of the glass. If it hits the side of the glass one time it will be a year before you get married; twice, two years, and if it doesn't hit you'll marry soon.
283. If one walks with one shoe on and the other off, the number of steps taken will be the number of years before the person gets married.
284. If you fall up the steps you won't get married that year.
285. To set on the table is a sign you are wanting to get married.
286. To get two forks is a sign that you will be at a wedding.
287. Marry in white you will always live right.  
Marry in blue you will always live true.  
Marry in green you are ashamed to be seen.  
Marry in yellow you are ashamed of your fellow.  
Marry in brown you will live out of town.  
Marry in black you will wish you were back.  
Marry in red you will wish you were dead.
288. Pull a hair out of someone's head and let them cut it in two and what they say will be the first word they say when they are married.
289. When you are eating apples, name them your lover's name and you can see how your future will be by the number of seeds you get:

One they love, two they love,  
Three they love, I say;  
Four they love with all their heart,  
And five they cast away.  
Six he loves, seven she loves,  
Eight they both love.  
Nine he comes; ten he tarries;  
Eleven they court, and twelve they marry.

### 3. Babies

290. If you cut a baby's finger or toe nails off before they are a year old they will be a rogue.

- 291. If a child wants to write left or right handed and you make him change he will stutter.
- 292. If a baby keeps its hands closed tight it will be stingy.
- 293. If a baby has big ears it will be a musician.

#### 4. Death;

- 294. It means death very soon if you take an ax or hoe in a house and don't take it out the door you brought it in.
- 295. When you step over someone alive, you will step over them when they are dead.
- 296. When a person is sick and they change their head to foot they say they will die.
- 297. It is a sign of death for a bird to fly into the house.
- 298. If a hen crows and she is not killed, there will be an immediate death in the family.
- 299. If the rooster crows on the steps after dark, it's a sign of death.
- 300. If a thousand legs counts your teeth, you will die.
- 301. When you kill a spider and it points its finger at you, as many times as it points its finger it will be that many years until you die.
- 302. If you set out a cedar after it is big enough to shade your grave you will die.
- 303. If a picture falls from the wall three times there will be a death in the family.
- 304. Bells ringing in your ears, sign of death.
- 305. If you see seven white horses in a dream there will be a death in the family.

## E. SIGNS AND OMENS OF LUCK:

1. Bad-luck Omens;

- 306. For a black cat to come to your house means bad luck.
- 307. It is bad luck for a black cat to run across the road in front of you.
- 308. When a black cat crosses the road in front of you, you will have bad luck if you don't spit over your left shoulder.
- 309. If you carry a cat through town it is bad luck.
- 310. If a grown person carries a cat from one place to another they will have bad luck.
- 311. It is bad luck to bury chickens when they die.
- 312. It is bad luck for a dog to howl at night.
- 313. It is bad luck for a rabbit to cross the road in front of you.
- 314. For a rooster to crow after dark is bad luck.
- 315. If you see a wooly worm and don't spit, you will have bad luck.
- 316. If you meet a corpse, it is bad luck.
- 317. If you step over a grave and do not step back, backwards, you'll have bad luck.
- 318. You will forget everything you know if you comb your hair after dark.
- 319. If you don't keep a horseshoe hanging over your door, you will have bad luck.
- 320. It is bad luck to go out one door of a house and come in another.
- 321. It is bad luck to carry ashes out of the house between new and old Christmas.
- 322. If you keep wandering Jew, it is a sign of bad luck.
- 323. If you find a five leaf clover, it is bad luck.
- 324. It is bad luck to have two clocks in the same room.
- 325. It is unlucky to wear your clothes wrong side out.

326. To mend a hole in your hose or socks while wearing them is bad luck.
327. If you sing at the table, it is bad luck.
328. It is seven years' bad luck to break a mirror.
329. When you leave a rocking chair rocking, it is bad luck.
330. It is bad luck to stand under a step ladder when someone is climbing it.
331. If you cross over someone, it is bad luck.
332. If you walk in another person's tracks you will have bad luck.
333. Don't burn lightning-struck wood.
334. It is bad luck to burn sassafras wood. If you get some through a mistake return it to the place you found it, and you will not have bad luck.
335. It is bad luck to start some place and go back after something.
336. If you cut a person's hair while they are sick they will have bad luck.
337. It is bad luck to sweep under the bed of a sick person.
338. It is bad luck to sweep over the door-step after sunset.
339. It is bad luck to sweep the floor after sunset.
340. To step over a broom is bad luck.
341. When you move from one place to another, do not take your broom as it is bad luck to move a broom.
342. It is bad luck to move a cat.

## 2. Good-luck Omens;

343. When a rabbit crosses the road in front of you, spit behind you for good luck.
344. Carry a rabbit's foot with you for good luck.
345. Get a stone out of a crawfish head and it will bring you good luck.

- 326. To mend a hole in your hose or socks while wearing them is bad luck.
- 327. If you sing at the table, it is bad luck.
- 328. It is seven years' bad luck to break a mirror.
- 329. When you leave a rocking chair rocking, it is bad luck.
- 330. It is bad luck to stand under a step ladder when someone is climbing it.
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## 2. Good-luck Omens;

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- 344. Carry a rabbit's foot with you for good luck.
- 345. Get a stone out of a crawfish head and it will bring you good luck.

- 346. It is good luck to find a four leaf clover.
- 347. It is good luck to keep a horseshoe hanging over the door.
- 348. If you find a button, it will bring good luck.
- 349. It is good luck to find a button. As many holes as there are in the button you will have that many months of good luck.
- 350. Always pick up a hair-pin found lying on the floor for you have found a friend.
- 351. A pin on the floor pointing towards you means good luck. Pick it up.
- 352. If you drop a tablespoon it is a sign of good luck.

### 3. Optional or Alternative Signs;

- 353. If you find a straight pin with the point toward you, pick it up for good luck. If the head is toward you, leave it.
- 354. If you drop a book, you will have bad luck. If someone else steps on it and picks it up, you will have good luck.
- 355. When a rooster crows and stands facing the door, it is a sign of good luck. If it crows from the door, it is a sign of a death.
- 356. If the first silk you saw on the corn is red it is a wedding, and if it is white it will be a burying.

### F. OTHER OCCULT SIGNS AND PRACTICES:

#### 1. Predictions of the Future From;

##### a. Unusual Occurrences, Showing --

##### (1) Anticipated Visitors,

- 357. If a burning stick falls out of the fire you will have guests before the day is over.
- 358. As many times as the rooster crows in the back door, there'll be that many people come as guests.
- 359. If a dishrag drops all spread out, an untidy visitor is coming; if it falls in a heap, a neat person is coming.

360. If you drop a knife, a man will be your visitor; if a fork, a woman; and if a spoon, a child will visit you.
361. If you say a rhyme while conversing, go over your fingers with the alphabet and the letter it comes out on is the first initial of the visitor you are going to have that day.

(2) Gain or Loss in Family,

362. If a glowworm gets in the house after dark it is a sign there will be one more or one less present with the family the following night.

(3) Disappointment,

363. If you drop a teaspoon you will have a disappointment.

b. Unusual Physical Experiences

(1) Sneezing,

364. If you sneeze before breakfast on Sunday Morning you will hear of a death.
365. If you sneeze before you eat, you will have company before you sleep.
366. To sneeze on Monday, health;  
To sneeze on Tuesday, wealth;  
To sneeze on Wednesday, a letter;  
To sneeze on Thursday, something better;  
To sneeze on Friday, sneeze for sorrow;  
To sneeze on Saturday, you'll see your sweetheart tomorrow.

(2) Itching,

367. If your nose itches someone is coming.
368. (a) When your nose itches on the left side a woman is coming.  
(b) When your nose itches on the right side a man is coming.
369. (a) When your right eye itches you are going to be angry.  
(b) When your left eye itches you are going to be pleased.
370. (a) When your left eye itches you are going to be glad.  
(b) When your right eye itches you are going to be mad.

371. If your hands itch, you will shake hands with a stranger.
372. If your left hand itches, you are going to handle money.

(3) Ears Burning or Ringing,

373. When your ears burn someone is talking about you.

2. Control of;

a. The Future by --

(1) Wishes,

374. When two people say the same thing at the same time if they will take hold of each other's little finger and one says "needles" and the other "pins", (first) "all good wishes", (and second) "come to", (the first) "some good end". Then they look at something blue and make a wish and that wish will come true.
375. If a word is said at the same time by two people, hook your little fingers together and make a wish before another word is spoken and your wish will come true.
376. When the moon first is full, take up a rock and spit on the under side of it and lay it back down in its former position and your dream will come to pass.
377. When you see a star fall what you are thinking of will come true.
378. Make a wish, throw half of a horseshoe over your left shoulder, and the wish will come true.
379. If you find a horseshoe pick it up, make a wish, and hang it up.
380. When you put on your dress and the hem turns up, make a wish and it will come true.
381. Break a pulley bone on the inside of a table leg and make a wish and it will come true.

b. Other Persons by --

(1) Securing Secrets,

382. Pour water on anyone's feet who is asleep and they will tell their secrets.

### 3. Psychic and Supernatural Manifestations;

#### a. Dreams,

- 383. Get the dream bone out of a hog's head and sleep with it under your pillow and you will dream of the one you will marry.
- 384. When one sleeping under a new quilt for the first time dreams something it will come to be true.
- 385. To dream of a black horse is a sign of a wedding.
- 386. To dream of a white horse is a sign of death.
- 387. To dream of a death is a sign of a wedding.
- 388. To dream of a wedding is a sign of a death.
- 389. When a young girl dreams of sour pickles, it is a sign she is going to be kissed.
- 390. You will dream bad dreams if you sleep on your left side.
- 391. If you comb your hair after night you will have a bad dream.

#### b. Telepathy,

- 392. If you call someone's name when you intended to say something else, they are thinking about you.
- 393. If you burn the bread, your husband is angry.

#### G. THE WEATHER:

- 394. When a person's hair is "in case" in the morning it is a sign of rain.
- 395. Your hair will always curl up before a rain.
- 396. When your rheumatism hurts it is a sign of rain.
- 397. If the leaves turn over when the wind blows it is a sign of rain.
- 398. If a cat turns its back toward the fire it will be cold.
- 399. When the rooster crows before dark it is the sign of changing weather.

400. When the rooster crows on the roost before dark he is apt to get up with a wet head the next morning.
401. When a chicken lays down out in the sun, it is a sign of rain.
402. If it has been raining and if chickens start flying upon something high, it is a very good sign it will quit raining.
403. The number of buzzards you see flying at one time, it will be that many days before rain.
404. When the rain crow "hollers," it is going to rain.
405. When a tree frog or a rain crow "hollers," it is a sign of rain.
406. When red birds "holler," it is a sign of rain.
407. If you hear a hoot owl during the day, it will rain within three days.
408. When you hear an owl after night, it will rain in about three weeks.
409. If you kill a snake and hang him belly-up over a rail fence, it will rain.
410. If a groundhog comes out on the 14th of February and sees his shadow it is a sign of forty more days of bad weather.
411. When the first whippoorwill "hollers," spring has surely come.
412. When the wild geese go north it is a sign of warmer weather, but when they go south it is a sign of cold weather.
413. When hornets build their nest close to the ground there will be a bad winter.
414. After the first "katydid" "hollers," it will be three months until frost.
415. When you hear the first katydid, it will frost in 60 days.
416. If an ear of corn comes out and hangs over, it is a sign of a hard winter.
417. If everything on the table is eaten at night, there will be a fair day the next day.

418. When an electric light blinks it is storming somewhere.
419. For the sky to be full of stars is a sign of dry weather.
420. Ring around the moon, rain soon; Ring around the sun, rain none.
421. If the moon is level it is holding the water, if it is upside down it has no water.
422. When a new moon is hanging on tip, it won't rain for a long time for all the water is poured out.
423. If the moon has a ring around it, it is a sign of rain. If the ring is small it will rain soon. If the ring is large it won't rain for sometime.
424. A red moon means rain before morning.
425. Red streaks in the sky in the morning mean bad weather. Red streaks at night mean fair weather.
426. If the sun goes down behind a cloud it is a sign of rain.
427. If the sun goes down clear the following day will be clear.
428. When the sun sets red it will rain or the wind blow next day.
429. If the sun goes pale to bed, It will rain tomorrow, it is said.
430. Mare-tail in the sky is a good sign of rain.
431. When clouds are red at sunrise it is a sign of rain.
432. If it rains while the sun is shining it will be raining at that same time the next day.
433. Wind staying out of the north long enough is a sign of rain.
434. When it is going to rain it is warmer.
435. When it lightens in the east it will rain in three days.
436. Lightning in the east is a sign of dry weather.
437. When it lightens and there is no cloud it will rain in 48 hours.

438. When it lightens in the north it will rain within 42 hours.
439. Lightning in the south is a sign of a drought.
440. A rainbow in the morning means rain.
441. Early rain in the morning is like an old woman's dance, soon over.
442. When it rains on Monday there will be three days' rain that week.
443. Rain on Monday means it will rain three days out of the week.
444. If the sun sets on Sunday night cloudy it is likely to rain before the next Sunday night.
445. If the sun sets clear on Sunday night it isn't apt to rain before Wednesday night.
446. If the sunset is cloudy on Wednesday night it will rain before Sunday night.
447. When it is windy on Wednesday there will be rain before Sunday night.
448. If it does not rain from the 25th to the 28th of July it will not rain for forty days.
449. It never rains at night in July.
450. As many fogs as there are in October, there will be that many snows during the winter.
451. The number of times it thunders in February it will frost that many times in May.
452. If it thunders in February there will be a cool spell or a frost that time in May.
453. When it thunders in February winter has broken.
454. When you get up on a winter morning and it is cloudy, it is a good sign of rain or snow within 24 hours.
455. When the wind comes out of the north on a winter day it is a sign of cold weather.
456. Rain hanging heavy on the branches of trees or on wires is a sign of cold weather.

## H. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS;

457. If you take an ax in the house be sure and take it out the way you brought it in.
458. If you come in one door always go out at the same one.
459. Sing after you go to bed and you will get up angry.
460. Kiss your elbow and you will turn to a boy or girl.
461. Don't ever go near a graveyard at night if you don't want to see ghosts and haunts.
462. If you see a basting thread in a dress, the dress is not paid for.
463. As many stitches as you sew on your clothes while they are on you, you will have that many lies told on you.
464. Sunshine will take out scorched places.
465. Roll a ball of yarn around where there are fleas and they will get tangled up in it and you can catch them.
466. Place a pod of red strong pepper in oil of the lamp and this will prevent the globe from being smoked.
467. Mix asafetida in with fish bait to make the fish bite better.
468. If a boy walks in his father's tracks he will be what the father is, be he preacher, doctor, lawyer, or drunkard.
469. If you walk on your heels one-fourth of a mile you will find some gold.
470. When you walk with one shoe on and the other off you will get a whipping before the day is gone.

W. Adelbert Redfield  
Pleasant Hill Academy

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Members of the Society are urged to report their publications.

H. S.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Since the February issue of the Bulletin we have an additional item to add to our list of special interests in folk-lore investigation for which leaders have been enlisted:  
Folk Idiom and Linguistic Survivals  
Roscoe E. Parker, Knoxville

\* \* \* \*

Our Society takes pleasure in hailing the advent of the Southern Folklore Quarterly of the Southeastern Folklore Society, edited by Mr. Alton G. Morris, at Gainesville, Florida. First issue, March, 1937. It is not only acceptable in appearance but its contents are representative and valuable. Surely there is much possibility of common benefit between our Society and Bulletin and the Southeastern Society and its new publication.

\* \* \* \*

In this issue we are publishing the names of members of the Tennessee Folk Lore Society, counting still as members those who paid dues for 1935-1936 as well as those who are paid up to date. Those who wish to pay 1936-1937 dues, please send one dollar to Miss Geneva Anderson, Treasurer, Sevierville Road, Maryville, Tennessee.

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